



Great Lakes Shooting Sports Association

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During the debate of concealed carry reform in Michigan, there were those who had the unfounded fear that more people carrying guns would result in more violence. As a way of compromising with some of the groups of people who had these unfounded fears our legislation ended up with areas where licensed citizens were prohibited to carry (pistol free zones).

While I don't believe that there is any increased margin of safety by declaring any area a pistol free zone, it is the law of our state. This part of the legislation was crafted carefully and seems unambiguous; a school or school property, a public or private child care or daycare center, a sports arena or stadium, a bar or tavern (with certain exceptions), places of worship (with exceptions), entertainment facilities with a seating capacity of 2500 or more, a hospital, and the last prohibited area listed in Michigan law (28.425o sec.1 a-h) a dormitory or classroom of a community college, college, or university.

Since the original legislation was passed, language has been added (28.425o sec. 3) which excludes the parking areas of the previously mentioned prohibited premises.

Legislation, at times, can be quite technical and sometimes conflict with other laws. For example; Michigan's hunting & fishing laws created circumstances where a CPL holder could be accused of poaching just because he drove on a public road, through an area, frequented by game while carrying a firearm. Most of these problems have been addressed by Michigan legislators as citizens clearly articulate the need for change.

Again, another situation has come to the forefront. In a discussion I had with authorities of Kellogg Community College of Battle Creek about using a theater on campus for a public meeting, these authorities expressed a concern that some might attend the meeting armed. I replied, yes. In fact, it was my intention to attend the meeting and since I am licensed and the theater is not a classroom or dormitory I thought it not inappropriate for me to carry my pistol as I usually do. This official then informed me that the KCC Board of Trustees declared the entire campus, including the parking lots a classroom and therefore it is illegal for anyone except police officers to come on campus with a firearm. At that point in the discussion, I told the official that firearms preemption law prevents local units of government from enacting rules that are more restrictive than State law. I also made the suggestion that KCC should change their policy to comply with State law.

At this point, KCC has not changed their policy and it would appear that other colleges have adopted the same or similar policy, apparently believing that they are not subject to preemption law.

I believe it was clearly the intention of the legislature to allow citizens with a CPL to carry on campuses with, of course, the exception of classrooms and dormitories. I also believe it was clearly not the legislature's intention to exclude institutions of higher education from the restraints of preemption law. Therefore, I support HB-5474 and it is my hope that this Committee will recommend it to the other members of the House for their consideration.